

**II. Amendments to the Specification**

Please amend Paragraph 18 as follows:

[0018] The NMOS transistors 325 and 326 are connected in series. In some embodiments, the NMOS transistor 325 is a cascaded NMOS transistor, and the series NMOS transistors 325 and 326 are called a ST MOS. Each drain terminal of the NMOS transistors 325 is coupled to the pad 310, and each source terminal of the NMOS transistors 326 is coupled to a Vss1 terminal. Each gate terminal of the NMOS transistors 325 is connected to an output terminal 364 of the inverter 360. Each gate terminal of the NMOS transistors 326 ~~325~~ is connected to a level-shift circuit 340. For some embodiments, the numbers of NMOS transistors 325 and 326 and PMOS transistors 323 are more than, or equal to, 1.